

Your Empowering Counsel that stands alongside you

Key Promise: Acts 1:8

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses ... *NKJV*

How the Holy Spirit is standing alongside you to empower you beyond your natural capacity to fulfill your GREAT destiny despite the imperfect situation.

Many people are living a miserable, depressed and defeated life because they are not aware of the power of the Holy Spirit.

They are so focused on what they don't have - ability, connections, personality, etc. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 12, that we are not to be ignorant of spiritual gifts. The Holy Spirit is always on a standby to empower you so that you can be taken beyond your natural ability to His ability.

Matt 5:4

⁴Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be **comforted**. *NKJV*

Comfort παρακαλεω *parakaleō*: To call to the side of, an advocate to help, defend, counsel, guide, exhort, comfort.

John 14:16-18

¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengtheners, and Standby), that He may remain with you forever. *AMP*

Comforter παρακλητος *parakletos*: Comforter, Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengtheners, Standby. *AMP*

Acts 2:4

And they were all **filled** with the Holy Spirit and began to **speak** with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. *NKJV*

Filled πληθω *plēthō*: To fill, make full, complete, accomplish, to empower.

Why is it that the first thing that the Holy Spirit takes control of is our tongues?

I. HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN EMPOWER YOU ON A DAILY BASIS

1. He is your Comforter that stands you

He gives you in the midst of distress.

Isa 28:11-12, 1 Cor 14:21

For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people, ¹²To whom He said, "This is the rest with which You may cause the weary to rest, And, "This is the refreshing"; Yet they would not hear. *NKJV*

Why is the spirit of rest so important?

The place of rest is the place of

1 Chron 22:8-9

Prov 14:30

Peace of mind makes the body healthy, but jealousy is like a cancer. *TEV*

Jude 1:20-21

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹keep yourselves in the love of God. *NKJV*

1 Cor 14:18

How do we pray continuously in tongues?

Eph 5:19

... speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. *NKJV*

2. He is your Counsel

John 16:13

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. *NIV*

Why is His guiding us personally so comforting?

How does the Lord guide us personally?

Eph 6:17-18

Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸**And** pray in the Spirit. *NIV*

Word of God ρῆμα *rhēma*:

The living spoken word, the right word in the right time in the right place.

And pray in the Spirit

and δια *dia*: through, by means of.

As we pray in the Holy Spirit and rest in Him, we will receive his divine promptings, impressions and creative ideas.

2 Chron 14:7

How do we know if a creative idea or impression is from God?

The **KEY TESTS** to confirm the impressions and creative ideas:

Peace Col 3:15

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts ... *NIV*

Witnesses Matt 18:16; 1 Cor 14:19

Word & Christ-centred. John 15:26

... he shall testify of me. *KJV*

3. He is your Strengthener to take you beyond the

Why is it important to receive His power in our daily life and business?

Acts 1:8

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses ... *NKJV*

John 7:38

Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. *NIV*

2 Tim 1:6

1 Cor 12:8-10

4. He is your Intercessor to take on your weakness

Rom 8:26

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. *NIV*

Weakness ἀσθενεία *astheneia*: weakness, sickness, infirmities, impotence.

Jesus took our , Matt 8:17, Isa 53:4

Matt 8:17

"He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses." *NKJV*

The Holy Spirit helps as we don't know to pray.

What do I do when I feel a burden to pray?

What can I do when I feel I don't have what it takes to do my work or studies?

The Holy Spirit helps us in our personal

5. He is your Advocate to take you out of your

John 16:7

But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you. *NLT*

How does the Holy Spirit become your lawyer?

Rom 8:3-4

***The Holy Spirit who you are in Christ
despite your mess***

Rom 8:16

The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God. *NASB*

Why is it important to know our worth in Christ despite our bad choices?

The Holy Spirit helps you to with your mess so that you can move on

Rom 8:26

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our **weakness**. *NIV*

Help συναντιλαμβάνω *syn-anti-lambanō*: Together with - together with - take on.

Exo 20:5-6

Iniquities: Character bent, traits, abnormalities and bondages.

Isa 10:27

And it shall be in that day, his burden shall turn away from on your shoulder, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing. *LITV*

Gal 5:16

... Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust (desires) of the sinful nature. *NKJV/NIV*

6. He is your Helper – leading you to and what has prepared for you

John 14:25-28

²⁶But the **Helper**, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your **remembrance** all things that I said to you. *NKJV*

Why does the Holy Spirit have to remind us of what Christ has done for us?

1 Cor 2:12

We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has **FREELY** given us. *NIV*

John 16:14 He will bring **glory** to me by taking from what is **mine** and making it **known** to you.

John 15:26 ... he shall **testify** of me. *KJV*

What is the clearest sign a person is filled with the power of the Holy Spirit?

Eph 5:18-20

Acts 10:46

For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. *NIV*

Psa 67:5-6

May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you. ⁶Then the land will yield its harvest, and God, our God, will bless us. *NIV*

7. He is your Standby to do in your life

Acts 2:7-11

... we hear them **speaking** in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." *NKJV*

What are the wonderful works of God?

Why is it important to declare what God says?

Job 22:28

You will also declare a thing, And it will be established for you; So light will shine on your ways. *NKJV*

1 Cor 14:4

He who speaks in a tongue edifies **himself**, but he who prophesies edifies the church. *NIV*

Edifies οικοδομεο *oikodomeo*: To build or renovate a building.

II. HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Acts 2:4

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues (language) ... *NKJV*

1 Rest in His Grace

Rom 5:17

God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness ... *NIV*

Put away all fear. Luke 11:11-13

2 Thirst and hunger for His presence and fullness

John 7:37

... If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. *NKJV*

3 Step out in faith and speak out

Matt 14:28

Acts 2:4

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and (they) began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. *NKJV*

Adventure this week:

1. Memorize Acts 1:8 and write this verse from memory here:

2. Pray in the Holy Spirit at all times, under your breath.

Focus on Jesus, His Word and be **conscious** of the Holy Spirit **alongside** you.

Receive His rest.

Have **quiet** moments and **listen** in your heart to what God is **saying**, any **prompting** or **creative** ideas. Confirm it with His peace and the Word.

He can **speak** immediately or at other times when you are **at rest** or **least expecting** it.

Expect God to do **WONDERS** in your life and to release **ASTOUNDING blessings** as you rest.

3. If you are feeling weak or are troubled in any area, spend more time praying in the Holy Spirit.

If God is dealing with you in a particular area, pray and be **open** to let him 'together with – take on' (*synantilambanō*) the **mess** you made. He will **affirm** who you are, **take** you **through** and **lift** you out of the mess. Be **open** to what he says. You will be set free to be all that God calls you to be.

4. Pray God-sized prayers and build a great destiny.

Big enough to know it is **beyond** your **natural** ability and **large** enough to **stretch** your faith.

Three major areas to ask everyday:

Favor, Protection/Health and Vision/Wisdom/Enabling.

These should involve the **enabling** to **reach out** and focus on **His** Kingdom and **His** glory (Matthew 6:9-13).

Pray like this:

“Dear Father, I lift this matter to you ... help me to pray the perfect prayer.”
Then pray in tongues. Pray until you have the peace. It may take a few minutes or a few days or months.

Declare what God says and it shall be established. Job 22:28

The best way is to declare His **Word** and Promises and pray in the Spirit as you are speaking the **wonders** of God, Acts 2:11.

Today's Article

Biblical Understanding of Water Baptism

From a Lutheran perspective.

Rom 14:1

Give a warm welcome to any brother who wants to join you, even though his faith is weak. Don't criticize him for having different ideas from yours about what is right and wrong. *LB*

I. WHAT IS WATER BAPTISM?

Some people believe that Baptism is merely an outward sign of an inward faith, or merely an act of obedience to Christ's command, or a way of joining a local church, giving us a sense of belonging. These are correct but the Bible has **much, much more to say** concerning baptism:

Acts 9:10-19

There was no public to witness the baptism of Paul; only Ananias was present.

Gal 3:26

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. *NIV*

God adopts us as His children when we believe in Christ and through baptism we are fully **clothed** and **empowered** in Christ.

Acts 2:38

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit". *NIV*

Rom 6:3-4

Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? ⁴For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. *NLT*

Through baptism, we were **buried** and **raised** with Christ. We are totally **identified** with Christ, not merely symbolically, but factually!

1 Cor 12:13

For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. *NIV*

Baptism empowers you to be identified with a local church and to be committed to it, having a sense of belonging. We are given the opportunity to develop our lives and spiritual gifts.

II. HOW SHOULD A PERSON BE BAPTIZED?

Some people believe that **immersion** is the only biblical method of baptism. There are logical reasons but the Bible clearly didn't say that there is **only one method** of water baptism. To specify only one way is not only **extra-biblical** but also **not practical**. There are times; other methods have to be used, like when a person is in ICU.

God being the Most Wise, has chosen water, the most readily available element to be used in baptism. Immersion baptism although seeming more meaningful, is not very practical in all situations (due to location, climate, age or health).

Too much emphasis on the method may detour us from the **main purpose** of baptism as stated above.

The Greek word for **baptism** "βαπτίζω" *baptizō*, is used in different ways in the Bible:

Mark 7:4

And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the **washing** of cups and pots, brasen vessels, and of **tables (beds)**. *KJV*

Could the Pharisees immerse their beds or tables every time they slept or ate?

Surely not. It simply means they sprinkled the water over the table in a ceremonial manner.

Acts 2:41

Three thousand people were baptized in Jerusalem (a very small hill). Could all of them be baptized by immersion?

Jerusalem has no river nor lakes and it is in the midst of a desert.

Does the phrase "buried with Christ" support immersion? Col 2:12

Christ was buried side-ways on a hill, in a tomb. Not six feet underground. If one really wants to be symbolically meaningful, he needs to be baptized through a water fall!

The phrase does not refer to the method but to the meaning of baptism.

Faith, not the method of baptism, is important. It is not the **quantity** of H²O (water) but **faith** that saves!

III. SHOULD BABIES BE BAPTIZED?

Some people have reservations toward baptism for babies.

This actually keeps our children from the special grace that is released through baptism:

The Bible says forbid them not!

Matt 19:14

But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." *NKJV*

1. Babies can have faith!

Who says babies cannot **believe** or come to **respond** to what Christ has for them?

Matt 18:6

"But whoever causes one of these **little ones who believe** in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. *NKJV*

Psa 22:9-10

Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you even at my mother's breast. ¹⁰From birth I was cast upon you; from my mother's womb you have been my God. *NIV*

Luke 1:41

At the sound of Mary's greeting, Elizabeth's child leaped within her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. *NLT*

The psalmist started to believe God while he was still in the **womb**. John the Baptist **leaped** in his mother's womb when Jesus drew near. Faith is more than just intellectual perception. It is primarily trust. Faith is a gift of grace. Parents today have learned that it is good to sing and speak to the fetus while it is in its mother's womb. They can respond in faith!

Some fear that children will take their faith for granted and there is no genuine faith.

What is needed is not to abolish child baptism but more proper teaching and prayer.

Baptize first and teach!

Matt 28:19,20

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit²⁰ and **teaching** them to obey everything I have commanded you. *NIV*

2. Children are in need of grace as much as you are!

Some think that children are not held accountable to God until the age of accountability. The term 'age of accountability' is never used in the Bible.

Rom 5:12

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to **all men**, because all sinned.... *NIV*

Death spread to all men as a result of the sin of Adam. Young and old are also suffering from the consequence of sin.

Psa 51:5

Surely I was **sinful at birth**, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

Since children are born in sin they are in need of God's grace as much as adults.

The manifestation of this sinful nature is seen almost immediately after birth. You don't have to teach a child to misbehave. He does it naturally.

Acts 2:38-39

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ **for** the **forgiveness** of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹The promise is **for** you and your children and for all who are far off ... for all whom the Lord our God will call." *NIV*

The promises of the forgiveness of sin and the Holy Spirit are given to adults as well as children.

3. Your children are born into the covenantal family

Some prefer to give children the freedom of choice. But we are **responsible** to choose the right thing for them at this age.

When you adopt a mature child, you ask him to make a conscious declaration of his willingness to be adopted. But when you adopt a baby, do you ask him to make a declaration of faith in you? No, his very helplessness is an appeal for adoption.

We choose the best kindergarten and school for our children. In the same way we should choose to raise them up in the grace of the Lord. When they grow up, they still have the free choice to continue to believe or deny their faith.

But being born in the covenantal family and being baptized exposes them to the great grace that enables them to continue to believe.

Those who frequently engage in the deliverance ministry often find that baptism is a powerful weapon to rid a child of familiar spirits and generational curses.

Baptism fulfils the Old Testament seal of circumcision. In the OT, children were also circumcised.

If the Old Covenant included children, how much more the new, which is a more glorious covenant? It is also by no accident that children are born to Christian parents. It is a sign that God wants them included in the covenant. The Bible says to baptize them first and then teach!

Acts 16:30-33

He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

³¹They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, **you and your household.**" ³²Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. ³³At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his **family** were baptized. *N/V*

The whole family was baptized, clearly including children as well.